

Aug 8th, 10:15 AM - 11:05 AM

Finding the Local: Researching Communities for Service Learning Projects

Allen Reichert

Otterbein University, preichert@otterbein.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarcommons.scu.edu/libraries-and-service-learning>

Reichert, Allen, "Finding the Local: Researching Communities for Service Learning Projects" (2017). *Colloquium on Libraries & Service Learning*. 4.

<http://scholarcommons.scu.edu/libraries-and-service-learning/2017/Sessions/4>

This Event is brought to you for free and open access by the Conferences and Events at Scholar Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Colloquium on Libraries & Service Learning by an authorized administrator of Scholar Commons. For more information, please contact rscroggin@scu.edu.

Finding the Local: Researching Communities for Service Learning Projects

Allen Reichert

Otterbein University



Shall I begin by being
audacious?



The Otterbein Love Song

In a quiet peaceful village,
There is one we love so true.
She ever gives a welcome
To her friends both old and new.
She stands serene
'Mid tree tops green
She's our dear Otterbein.

- Student approach to service learning research
- Influence of student volunteer work
- Evaluating volunteer organizations
- Other findings



OTTERBEIN
UNIVERSITY

FOUNDED 1847

CLASS OF '76





WARM

SERVING SINCE 1972

Westerville Area Resource Ministry



SOLES 4 SOULS
WEARING OUT POVERTY

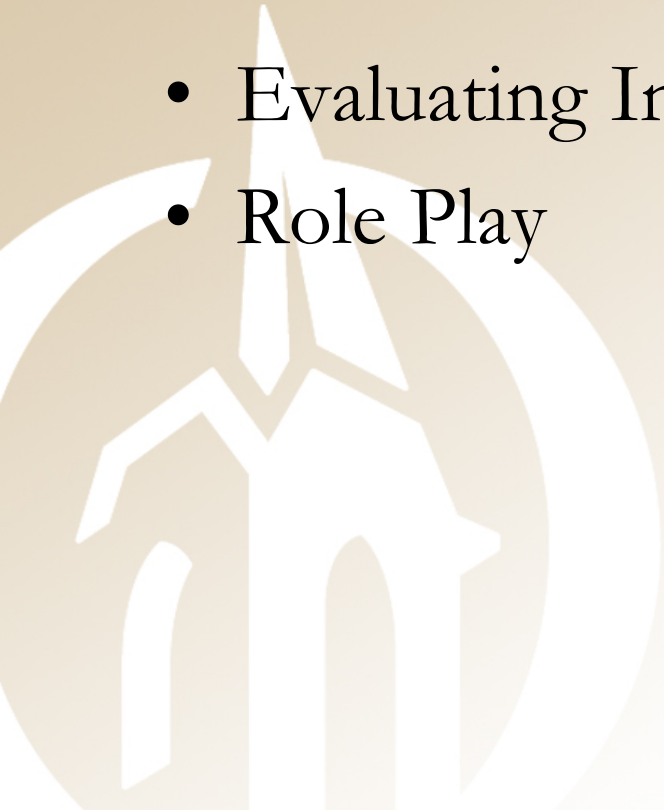


THE
PROMISE
HOUSE

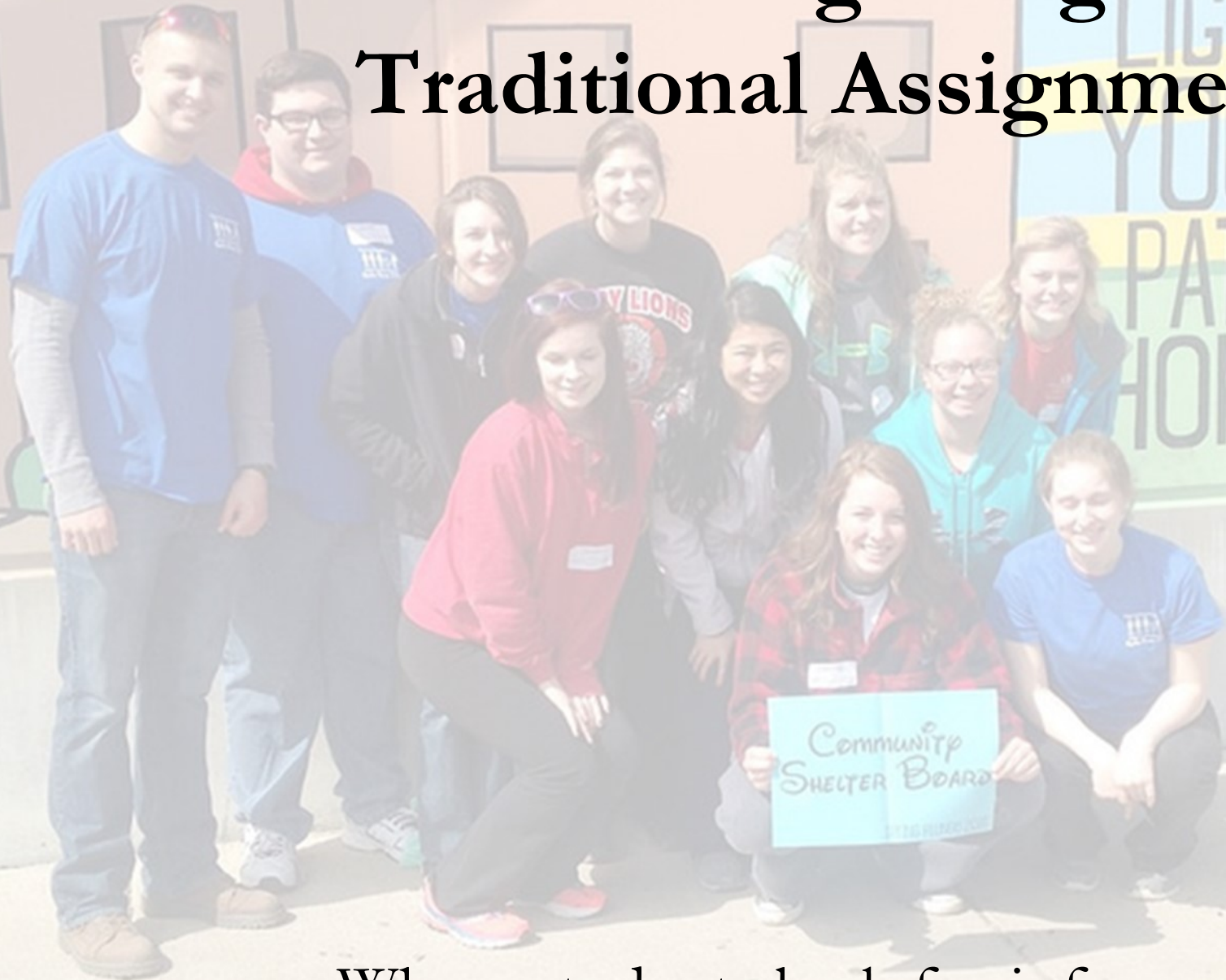


Broad Student Questions

- Background Information
- Information Seeking Behaviors
- Evaluating Information
- Role Play



Service Learning Assignment vs Traditional Assignment



Traditional



Service



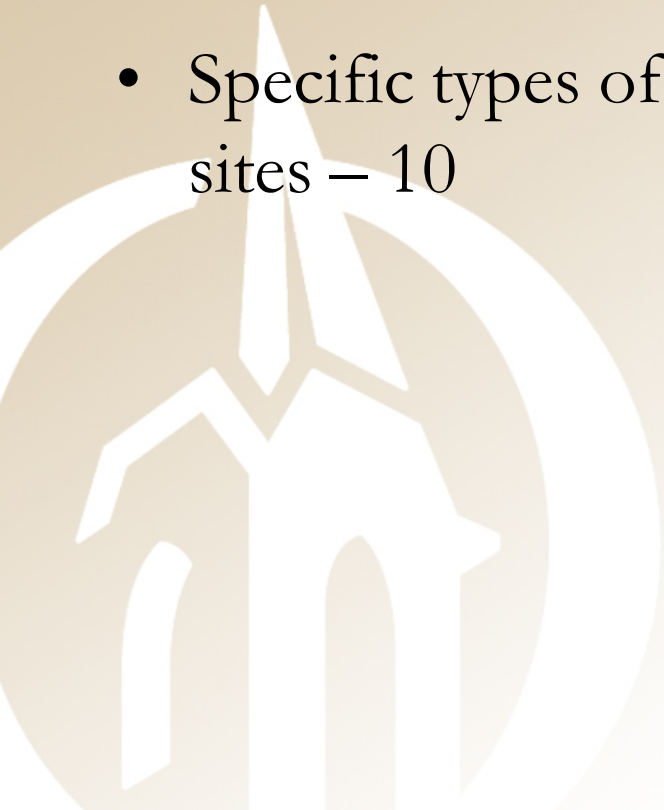
Where students look for information

Traditional Research

- Library Sources – 17
- Google – 16
- Specific types of web sites – 10

Service Research

- Direct to WARM – 11
- Google – 10
- Library Sources – 5
- People they know – 5
- Promise House – 4
- Other organizations -3
- Churches - 2



Differences

- Reliance on organizations and WOM for service projects
- Where students look is more diffuse with service learning assignments
- Some students “more hopeful” than confident when looking for service learning information

Table 4.1. Differences between Academic and Real-World Information

Academic Information	Information in the Real World
Centrally held	Decentralized
Classified by controlled vocabularies and thesauri	Classified in various ways: chronologically, by administration, etc.
Scholarly (i.e., peer-reviewed)	Community based
Subscription based and proprietary	Freely available and open source
Largely created by scholars for scholars	Largely created by stakeholders/practitioners for stakeholders/practitioners
Structured to be findable via library search tools and strategies like keyword and subject search	Difficult to find using academic search strategies
Easily cited using approved citation guides/bibliographic tools	Difficult to cite using citation guides

Chart from: Stark, Megan. (2016) "Information in the Real World: Building a Bridge between Academic & Community Information through Service Learning" in *Service Learning, Information Literacy, and Libraries*.

Resources that provided useful results in the past will be used again, regardless of whether they are appropriate for the new research task.

Michelle D'Couto, 2015



Influence of Volunteer Work

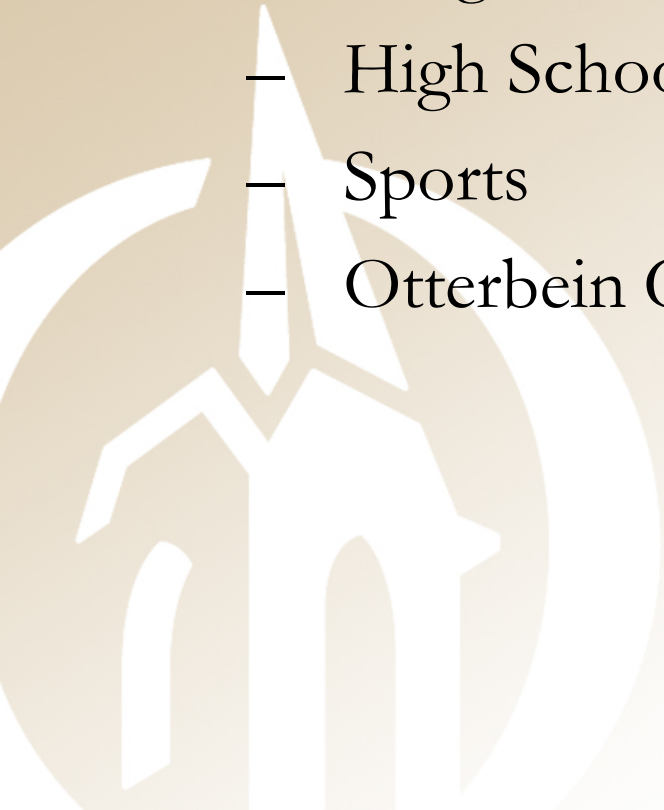


**FIRST FLIGHT IN SERVICE
LET THE PLUNGE BEGIN**

What lead to volunteer work?

Main influences:

- Religion
- High School
- Sports
- Otterbein Classes



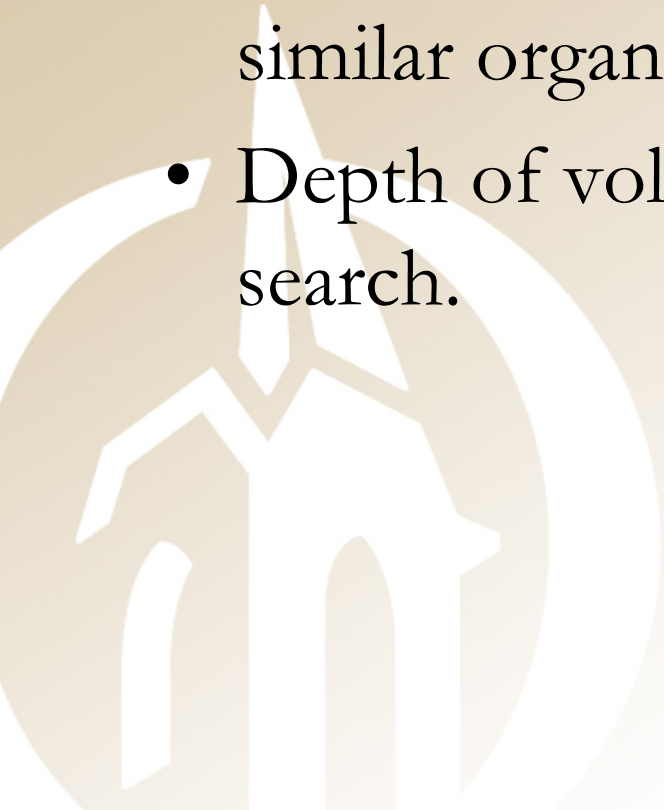
Types Volunteer Work

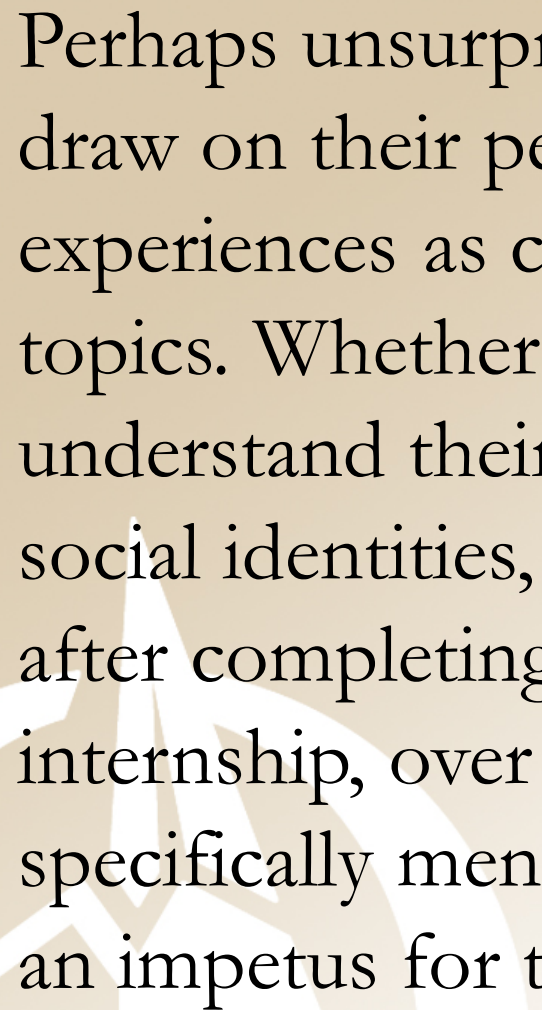
Broad categories

- School/ education
- Church/Mosque
- Children/ sports
- Food/ hunger
- Other

Observations

- Volunteering with food bank or pantry gave the students more confidence looking for similar organizations.
- Depth of volunteering impacts how they search.





Perhaps unsurprisingly, students tended to draw on their personal backgrounds or life experiences as catalysts for their research topics. Whether they wanted to better understand their own family histories or social identities, or address lingering questions after completing a volunteer project or internship, over a third of the students specifically mentioned personal experience as an impetus for their work.

-Bonnet, pg44

Thick Volunteering

“a form of volunteering that is rich in quality, heavily saturated with social and individual meaning, and having a depth to that meaning.”

O'Toole, pg. 89



Assessing Community Organizations



w e n e e d y o u r h e l p !



What do students look for?


How do they evaluate?

- Values/purpose/mission – 19
- Google – 14
- Talk to people from the organization – 12
- Website – 9
- WOM – 6
- Online Reviews (Yelp, Google) - 5

Observations

- Concern about mission & role
- Trust in personal connections (interviewing skills)
- Importance of Website/ Social Media

Other Reflections

- Statistical literacy
- Importance of government resources
- Expert Interviews 



Conclusion

- Encourage engagement with past volunteer work if relevant.
- More emphasis on government resources
- Continue seeking out & highlighting local sources
- Develop/ highlight interview design

Select Bibliography

- Bonnet, Jennifer L., Sigrid Anderson Cordell, Jeffrey Cordell, Gabriel J. Duque, Pamela J. MacKintosh, and Amanda J. Peters. 2013. "The Apprentice Researcher: Using Undergraduate Researchers' Personal Essays to Shape Instruction and Service." *Portal: Libraries and the Academy* 13 (1): 37-59.
- Dana, Jason, Robyn Dawes, and Nathaniel Peterson. 2013. "Belief in the Unstructured Interview: The Persistence of an Illusion." *Judgment and Decision Making* 8 (5): 512-520.
- D'Couto, Michelle and Serena H. Rosenhan. 2015. "How Students Research: Implications for the Library and Faculty." *Journal of Library Administration* 55 (7): 562-576.
- Nutefall, Jennifer E. 2009. "The Relationship between Service Learning and Research." *Public Services Quarterly* 5 (4): 250-261.
- O'Toole, Michelle and Chris Grey. 2016. "Beyond Choice: 'Thick' Volunteering and the Case of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution." *Human Relations* 69 (1): 85-109.
- Riddle, John. 2010. "Information and Service Learning." *Critical Library Instruction: Theories and Methods*: 133-148.
- Sax, Linda J., Alexander W. Astin, and Juan Avalos. 1999. "Long-Term Effects of Volunteerism during the Undergraduate Years." *The Review of Higher Education* (2): 187-202.
- Stark, Megan. "Information in the Real World: Building a Bridge between Academic and Community Information through Service Learning." In *Service Learning, Information Literacy, and Libraries*, edited by Jennifer Nutefall, 51-65. Santa Barbara: Libraries Unlimited, 2016.

Questions? Comments?

